

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VALLET 00635 061540Z
ACTION EUR-12

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R 061516Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7428

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 0635

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MT
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH MINTOFF

REF: STATE 126811,

1. APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S PROMPT RESPONSE REGARDING HABIB VISIT.
2. I SAW MINTOFF FOR SUNDAY SWIM AND LUNCH AT HIS WEEKEND BEACH COTTAGE. PRESENCE OF SEVERAL OTHER GUESTS PRECLUDED MUCH SERIOUS CONVERSATION. HOWEVER I TOLD MINTOFF THAT I WOULD LIKE TO SEE HIM FOR SUBSTANTIVE TALK ON HIS RETURN FROM COMMONWEALTH CONVERENCE AND HAVE TODAY REAFFIRMED THAT REQUEST ORALLY TO MAURICE ABELA AT FOREIGN MINISTRY.
3. I TOLD MINTOFF THAT UNDER SECRETARY HABIB APPRECIATES HIS INVITATION AND WOULD WELCOME AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH PM IN COURSE OF FUTURE TRIP THROUGH THE AREA. I SAID NO SUCH TRIP NOW SCHEDULED BUT THAT WHEN ONE IS WE WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH TO AGREE ON A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE DATE.
4. MINTOFF SAID HE WAS GLAD TO HAVE THIS ACCEPTANCE AND HOPED THAT HABIB'S VISIT COULD BE SOON BECAUSE OF WHAT

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HE DESCRIBED AS "CRUCIAL" TIME JUST AHEAD IN DISCUSSIONS WITH EUROPEANS. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING BY THE END OF JUNE. WHEN I INDICATED SOME DOUBT THAT THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE OR EVEN NECESSARY, MINTOFF SAID THAT PERHAPS SOME OF THE DETAILS COULD BE WORKED OUT LATER BUT THAT BASIC AGREEMENT MUST BE REACHED NOW ON ECONOMIC SIDE TO COMPLEMENT WHAT HAD BEEN ACHIEVED REGARDING

NEUTRALITY GUARANTEE.

5. IN SAYING THIS, MINTOFF MADE NO REFERENCE TO POSSIBILITY OF U.S. ASSISTANCE ALTHOUGH IN A SEPARATE EXCHANGE HE HAD COMMENTED WITH RESPECT TO GOM REQUEST FOR SURPLUS PROPERTY THAT WE NOW HAVE IN HAND THAT HE CONTINUED TO HOPE SOME OF THIS MIGHT BE PROVIDED ON GRANT BASIS. I REAFFIRMED THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE BUT THAT PURCHASE ARRANGEMENTS UNDER SURPLUS PROPERTY PROGRAM WERE NONETHELESS HIGHLY FAVORABLE IF WE COULD GET AGREEMENT ON SPECIFIC ITEMS IN LIST AND ON LOCATION OF THESE ITEMS. I TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND PM THAT LIST AS WE NOW HAVE IT (VALLETTA 621) APPEARED TO US TO BE POORLY COORDINATED WITHIN GOM AND WE HAD ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION.

6. PM LEAVES TOMORROW FOR COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE, A BRIEF VISIT TO PARIS TO MEET WITH FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JUNE 9, AND MEETING WITH ANDREOTTI IN ROME JUNE 16. HE RETURNS HERE JUNE 17, JUST BEFORE CONFERENCE OF "PROGRESSIVE MEDITERRANEAN SOCIALIST PARTIES" SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 20-25. IF POSSIBLE, THEREFORE, I THINK WE SHOULD DEFER A DECISION ON TIMING FOR HABIB VISIT UNTIL AT LEAST MINTOFF RETURNS AND I HAVE HAD CHANCE TO GEO A DIRECT READING OF WHERE HE STANDS WITH FRENCH AND ITALIANS AND PREFERRABLY AFTER THE JUNE 20-25 SOCIALIST CONFERENCE. LATTER ASSEMBLY (QADHAFI EXPECTED; ARAFAT IS POSSIBLE) WILL BE INDICATIVE OF HOW SENSITIVE MINTOFF IS TO IMPACT OF SOME OF HIS PUBLIC RHETORIC ON THOSE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS THAT HE EXPECTS TO BE HELPFUL TO HIM.)
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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